

TESTIMONY OF BRIAN HERBERT

Author of The Forgotten Heroes
The Heroic Story of the United States Merchant Marine

(Testimony in support of H.R. 23, the “Belated Thank You
to the Merchant Mariners of World War II Act of 2007”)

This nation owes a debt of honor to the men of the U.S. Merchant Marine who served the Allied cause so valiantly in World War II. As a government and as a people we have let these heroes down by denying military benefits to them. It is a shameful chapter in American history, and a national disgrace.

From 1941 - 1945, the War Shipping Administration sent civilian seamen into war zones, transporting troops, bombs, tanks, planes, aviation fuel, torpedoes, and other dangerous war materiel. The typical Allied soldier in Europe needed seven to eight tons of military supplies a year to sustain his ability to fight, and 80% of that was provided by the U.S. Merchant Marine.¹ These brave men became the lifeline of Allied forces overseas. Delivering essential cargoes, the U.S. Merchant Marine suffered more deaths per capita in World War II than any of the American armed forces -- a 32% higher rate than the highly publicized losses of the U.S. Marine Corps.²

Packed with military cargoes, the slow-moving ships of the Merchant Marine were easy targets for German and Japanese naval and air forces. Torpedoes fired at merchant ships carrying ammunition or petroleum often caused explosions so immense that no traces of the vessels or their crews were ever found. Merchant-ship duty was so hazardous that some men quit at the first opportunity and joined the armed forces -- where it was safer.

Seamen suffered terribly. Medical workers and survivors of the torpedoed oil tanker SS John D. Gill reported that the flesh of burned merchant seamen “would come off in your hands.”³ When the SS Benjamin Brewster was torpedoed, a survivor described the “screams of the dying, some . . . boiled alive, others fried on the steel decks. . . .” One of the engineers was “a charred and misshapen figure” on a stretcher.⁴ Among the merchant seamen who survived disasters at sea, many suffered amputations or other disfiguring injuries.

At the end of the war, the men and women of the U.S. armed forces were honored with victory parades and the G.I. Bill, which gave them educational benefits and low interest loans. But the members of the U.S. Merchant Marine received none of that. Instead they were shunned and ridiculed; they were called draft-dodgers, slackers, and bums. Many former seamen became derelicts without homes after the war, left to wander the streets of America like stray, unwanted animals. Some of them committed suicide.

The reasons for this involve politics and a veil of lies and distortions that was placed over the achievements of these men. It has even been alleged that they were overpaid, perhaps the biggest untruth of all. How could they possibly have been overpaid when they died in huge numbers and when survivors were denied military benefits for their entire lives? As I proved in my book The Forgotten Heroes, these men were in fact grossly underpaid. They operated ships with skeleton crews. They performed the work of at least half a million men (more than twice their actual numbers), and were sent into battle with the equivalent of pea shooters on their decks.

During the war, the Japanese Navy ordered their commanders to sink enemy ships and cargoes, and to “carry out the complete destruction of the crews. . . .”⁵ As a result, American merchant seamen were machine-gunned in their lifeboats, tortured by submarine crews, and thrown into shark-infested waters. Some survivors of the merchant ship SS Jean Nicolet -- with

their hands tied -- were left on the deck of a Japanese submarine and drowned when the captain crash-dived the sub.

The men of the U.S. Merchant Marine were independent sorts who often did not dress in uniforms or salute officers -- and they have been criticized for this. But there is an old saying: "The uniform does not make the man." It is essential to keep in mind that this country was served at its time of greatest peril by men who performed their jobs efficiently and completed their military assignments. They were individuals . . . the very essence of what it means to be an American.

They were also patriots. On June 27, 1942, Convoy PQ-17 sailed from Reykjavik, Iceland with thirty-four merchant vessels. They were bound for Russia in a rescue operation, transporting food, clothing and military supplies to the beleaguered nation, to keep it from falling to enemy forces. On July 3rd, "Lord Haw Haw" (the German version of Tokyo Rose) announced over the radio, "The Americans celebrate the Fourth of July tomorrow, and we shall provide the fireworks."

The next day the German Navy attacked in force. During the one-sided battle, American merchant ships were in radio contact with one another, and coordinated a remarkable act of bravery and defiance. To commemorate American Independence Day, they simultaneously raised large national flags, and sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."⁶

There are countless stories of Merchant Marine heroism and patriotism -- too many to tell in the time I have been allotted. Thank you for listening to my plea for justice. These men and their families deserve far more than we have given them. We would not be a free nation today if the U.S. Merchant Marine had not sacrificed so much on our behalf.

FOOTNOTES TO TESTIMONY OF BRIAN HERBERT

1. Dear, I.C.B., ed., Oxford Companion to World War II. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 1203; Collier's Encyclopedia. New York: P.F. Collier & Son Corporation, 1960, volume 12, p. 643.

2. Armed Forces statistics: World Almanac (1999), p. 209; Merchant Marine statistics: "American Merchant Marine in World War II" (p. 1 of 12 on the U.S. Merchant Marine website www.usmm.org as of October 5, 2001); also see The Anchor Light, March 2001, p. 5, and "Progress Report on Just Compensation," by Henry Van Gemert, Co-Chairman, in Salty Dog, December 2002.

3. Galati, Bob, compiler and editor, A Winning Team! The Armed Guard and Merchant Marine in World War II. Irving, Tex.: Innovatia Press, 1995, pp. 42-45; Millar, Ian A., "Tankers at War!" Sea Classics, July 1990, pp. 22-27.

4. Riesenber, Felix Jr., Sea War, the Story of the U.S. Merchant Marine in World War II. New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1956, pp. 115-116 (citing the account of Junior Engineer Ira C. Kenny, by Marjorie Dent Candee of The Lookout -- a publication of the Seamen's Church Institute).

5. Riesenber, Felix Jr., Sea War, pp. 36-37.

6. Edwards, Bernard, Blood and Bushido: Japanese Atrocities At Sea, 1941-1945. Note: Only an excerpt -- Chapter 13 -- of this book was provided to me by a retired merchant seaman, without publication information or page numbers. This chapter describes the tragedy of the SS Jean Nicolet. I also interviewed another merchant seaman who was one of the survivors of the Jean Nicolet, William B. ("Bill") Flury.

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF BRIAN HERBERT

I am enclosing edited excerpts from my book, The Forgotten Heroes, to illuminate the terrible dangers faced by the U.S. Merchant Marine during World War II, and how these brave seamen directly aided Allied military forces. Note: This document is based upon the electronic version of the text that I submitted to the publisher, and it differs slightly from the finished book, which was copyedited by the publisher. The basic evidentiary information, however, matches. For complete footnotes and other source information, please refer to the published book. In addition, the book contains photographs of torpedoed merchant ships and evidence of merchant ships carrying troops and war materiel. The Forgotten Heroes was published by Forge Books / Tom Doherty Associates, New York, ©2004 by Brian Herbert. ISBN: 0-765-30706-5 (hardcover) and 0-765-30707-3 (paperback).

WAR CRIMES COMMITTED AGAINST MERCHANT SEAMEN DURING WW II (Edited excerpts from Chapter 5 of The Forgotten Heroes, pp. 54-63):

The unarmed freighter SS David H. Atwater was shelled by a German U-boat on April 2, 1942, causing it to sink off the coast of Virginia. The crew was not given any chance to abandon ship, and when they tried to do so, their lifeboats were riddled by machine gun fire. Only three out of twenty-eight crew members survived.¹

Another unarmed ship, the converted tanker SS Carrabulle, was heavily shelled by a U-boat on May 26, 1942, in the Gulf of Mexico. Almost the entire crew escaped in two lifeboats. Then the submarine drew close to them, and the German captain asked if all hands had abandoned ship. The crew answered no. The officer then laughed and fired a torpedo at the SS Carrabulle. The explosion sank the ship and blew up one of the lifeboats, killing 22 of 24 men aboard.²

...A German submarine torpedoed the Greek freighter Peleus near Liberia. Two survivors were taken aboard the sub for questioning and then returned to their raft, after removing their life jackets. The commander of the submarine, Kapitänleutnant Heinz Eck, ordered his men to throw hand grenades at all of the rafts and to riddle them with machine-gun fire. After the war, Eck was found guilty of committing a war crime and was executed by firing squad.³

In 1943, two Allied merchant vessels, the SS Daisy Moller and the SS British Chivalry, were torpedoed in separate incidents by Japanese submarines in the Indian Ocean. When the crewmen tried to escape in lifeboats, the submarines rammed them and Japanese sailors machine-gunned the occupants.

A similar act of atrocity was committed the following year by Tatsunosuke Ariizumi, predatory commander of the Japanese submarine I-8. After torpedoing the Dutch merchant ship Tjissalak just south of Colombo, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), he ordered the survivors to board his sub. The Japanese then stole the men's watches, rings, and other valuables, and tortured them, hitting them with a sledge hammer, beheading them with swords, and machine-gunning them. Ariizumi massacred 98 seamen.⁴

...In 1944 there were at least three additional horrendous incidents of Japanese atrocities, all against Liberty ship crews. One involved the SS Richard Hovey, whose crew narrowly escaped the Japanese and survived 16 days in a lifeboat. When the merchant ship was sinking, the Japanese submarine surfaced, and men on the deck began firing machine guns and high velocity rifles at people in the lifeboats. The submarine drew closer and rammed one lifeboat, causing it to flip over. On the deck of the sub, Japanese men in khaki uniforms and caps laughed and shouted. One of them recorded the events with a motion picture camera. The Captain of the merchant ship, Hans Thorsen, was taken prisoner and died in captivity.⁵

I spoke with a survivor from another 1944 atrocity, Peter Chelemedos. He had been a young Chief Mate on the SS John A. Johnson, en route from San Francisco to Honolulu with a cargo of food, 500-pound bombs, ammunition, trucks, and tractors. It was torpedoed in the middle of the night.

... All members of the crew and military personnel aboard -- 70 people in all -- made it into lifeboats and onto rafts. Beneath a bright moon, the submarine surfaced, with a Japanese emblem on the side and the designation I-12. Laughing crew members appeared on the deck. They fired machine guns and pistols at survivors, shouting "Banzai!" whenever they hit the defenseless men.

Terrified merchant seamen dove out of the boats and off the rafts into the water, but the submarine came close and rammed the lifeboats, crushing a man to death who was clinging to the side. Men tried to avoid being seen.

...The submarine tore an Armed Guard gunner ... named Christensen ... to pieces in its propellers. Chelemedos recalled seeing the Japanese try to murder one of the stewards ... by catching him in the screws as he hung onto the side of the lifeboat with other men. The man managed to escape, but one of Peter's friends, a young ship's carpenter, was not so fortunate, and fell under the murderous hail of bullets. The young man had recently been married, and had his whole life ahead of him. ... Another survivor, Radio Officer Gordon Brown, had been on his first voyage at the time, and suffered severe mental anguish from the trauma of the experience, in which ten of his ship mates were murdered in cold blood. He was later killed in a kamikaze attack while on another merchant ship.⁶

The worst (known) World War II atrocity against American merchant seamen occurred in the Indian Ocean.... The Liberty ship SS Jean Nicolet left San Pedro, California, carrying a military cargo of mooring pontoons and unassembled landing barges lashed onto the decks, and important war supplies in the cargo holds, including two landing craft.

...At shortly after midnight on July 2, 1944, the ship was torpedoed and shelled by the Japanese submarine I-8. Fires broke out on the ship, and it listed so heavily -- at least 35 degrees -- that the captain feared it might capsize. All passengers and crew -- 100 people -- successfully abandoned ship in four lifeboats and two rafts. At this point only one man had a significant injury, a broken arm. Suddenly the men saw gun flashes in the night, and shells slammed into the SS Jean Nicolet, setting the ship on fire.

Then a strong searchlight shone from that direction, and a submarine became visible, with Japanese men standing on the deck, dressed in khaki uniforms with red Imperial Navy markings on their shoulders. At gunpoint the survivors were ordered aboard the submarine by its commander, the notorious Captain Ariizumi who had massacred the crew of a Dutch ship earlier in the year.

The first to be taken on board was the 17-year-old mess boy William M. Musser, who was shot in the head and kicked into the barracuda and shark-infested waters. The next victim was a 19-year-old ordinary seaman, Richard L. Kean. The other Americans had their hands tied tightly with cords or wire... One man was hit in the face with a lead pipe, breaking his nose and knocking out his front teeth. Two of the bound men were washed overboard by a bow wave, and left to drown. In the middle of the night, others were forced to run a gauntlet on the deck of the submarine, where laughing, taunting Japanese beat them with clubs, stabbed them with swords and knives, and hooked them into the water with fixed bayonets, brutally murdering more than half of the captives.

Just before dawn the following morning, 30 survivors were still on the deck of the submarine. Spotting an Allied plane -- a Catalina -- the Japanese guards disappeared into hatches, and then the captain crash-dived the sub, drowning half of the people on deck. One of the surviving merchant seamen, Bill Flury (whom I interviewed), was on the deck of the submarine at the time. With his hands tied behind his back, the young man managed to tread

water without a lifejacket, until one of his shipmates untied him. In the darkness, he heard the terrified screams of the men as sharks attacked them. He saw the burning Jean Nicolet sink and disappear. He swam all night, and was eventually rescued by a British submarine chaser.

...Faced with a war crimes trial at the end of the armed conflict, Captain Ariizumi disappeared, and was believed to have either swum ashore at one of the Japanese ports or to have committed hara-kiri.⁷

BRAVE ACTS OF MERCHANT SEAMEN DURING WW II (Edited excerpts from Chapter 7 of The Forgotten Heroes, pp. 73-78):

In 1942, the Liberty ship SS Virginia Dare shot down seven German planes in Convoy PQ-18 on the way to Murmansk, Russia. The proud crew painted seven swastikas on the smokestack of the ship, in honor of this, and received one of the few Gallant Ships awards of the war. In the same waters, the SS Bellingham won an argument with a German bomber by shooting it down.

Early in 1945, near the end of the war, the Liberty ship SS Henry Bacon was returning from Murmansk in another convoy. The weather in that area was particularly harsh and unpredictable, and when it worsened suddenly, the ship fell out of the convoy. A short while later, a squadron of more than twenty German torpedo planes attacked the Liberty ship, firing at least two torpedoes apiece. Remarkably, none hit the mark, as the helmsman steered the ship expertly to avoid them. During the fierce battle, the naval gun crew shot down five planes before a torpedo finally hit the ship below the water line at the #5 cargo hold. The Henry Bacon went down, but not without a heroic fight.²

I interviewed Alan H. Knox, who was on the Liberty ship W.W. McCracken when its gun crew shot down a Japanese “Betty” bomber off the coast of Australia. Mr. Knox, who was 86 years old when I spoke with him, described the battle in detail...

Thousands of other merchant seamen had stories to tell... In 1943, the Liberty ship SS Solomon Juneau shot down two German planes in the Mediterranean Sea, and assisted nearby ships in shooting down three more. In 1944, the MS Cape Romano was attacked by Japanese bombers. Suddenly a kamikaze plane streaked toward them, but the Armed Guard shot 20mm machine guns at it, hitting the pilot. The plane swerved and only hit the ship with a glancing blow on the port side that did not sink it. That same year, the SS John Evans was attacked by a Japanese plane, which strafed it with machine gun fire. The Armed Guard returned fire and killed the pilot. The plane hit the top mast and cargo booms before crashing into the water, but the ship was able to continue under its own power. Yet another event involved the SS Morrison R. Waite, which shot down a Japanese zero in the Philippines in November, 1944. Over the course of a 40 day period, the valiant crew of this ship went through no less than 135 air raid alerts.³

A number of Armed Guard crews claimed to have sunk German U-boats or Japanese submarines. Among those with such stories were the men working in the gun tubs of the SS William H. Berg, the SS Liberator, the SS Frederick R. Kellogg, the SS Lihue, the SS Charles C. Pinckney, and the SS Edgar Allen Poe. At the end of the war, however, the United States Navy and the British Admiralty discounted all of their claims, saying that captured submarine logs and other records did not support them.⁴ ...

The most legendary example of merchant seamen sinking a ship, a story that is well documented, concerned the SS Stephen Hopkins... The vessel was in ballast, on the way to Dutch Guiana to pick up a load of bauxite ore for the American war industry. ... On a rainy morning in September, 1942, the lookout saw two vessels emerge from a mist in the South Atlantic, heading directly toward them. Moments later the officers determined that they were

German raiders, and a general alarm was sounded. The crew of one of the approaching vessels -- the auxiliary cruiser Stier -- was in the process of painting camouflage on the vessel when the raiders came upon what they thought would be a sitting duck. The auxiliary cruiser, which had six 5.9" guns, was accompanied by a supply ship, the Tannenfels. In another engagement, a sister ship of the Stier, the Kormoran, sank a first-line Australian warship, the cruiser Sydney.

The Germans raised their battle flags, and at one thousand yards, they opened fire. One of their salvos hit a main boiler of the merchant ship, killing men in the engine room and slowing the vessel to a speed of only one knot.

Navy Ensign Kenneth M. Willett ran aft toward the 4" gun, but shrapnel hit him in the stomach. He kept going, firing shells that were only a third as heavy as those of the Stier. He operated the gun until the magazine blew up, killing him. In the forward gun tub of the Stephen Hopkins, the Armed Guard sailors had been killed, so Second Mate Joseph E. Layman took their place at the 37mm gun, aided by mess boy Herbert Love, who passed shells to him. They were hitting the Stier, but then the Tannenfels fired, killing both merchant seamen.

Seeing that the Stier was on fire and listing, Captain Paul Buck brought the Stephen Hopkins around, so that its aft gun could fire at it more directly. Having been hit in several places, the merchant ship was afire and sinking, but it still had some fight left. One of the civilian seamen aboard, engine cadet Edwin J. O'Hara (a Merchant Marine Academy Cadet-Midshipman) helped several injured Navy sailors to safety, then ran back to the aft gun, which was unmanned. He loaded one of the five remaining shells into the gun, fired it, and then fired another, and another, hitting the Stier repeatedly. Then both raiders opened fire on him with their bigger guns, killing him instantly.

This brave young seaman was an undergraduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York. Because of the need for seamen to man these ships on an emergency basis, he had been pressed into service before receiving his degree.

A short while after O'Hara died, the Stier sank, followed by the SS Stephen Hopkins, with its United States flag -- the Stars and Stripes -- still flying. A lifeboat from the merchant ship made it away across misty, choppy seas, carrying 19 men. Captain Buck was seen on a life raft, but was never heard from again. Four of the men in the lifeboat died before it made the coast of Brazil a month days later, without the aid of navigation instruments or charts.

Years afterward, Hans Grunert (one of the Tannenfels crewmen), told a German newspaper that they searched for American survivors in the rough seas, without success. Then he said, "With our flag at half-mast we made a full circle around the spot where the Liberty ship had sunk, thus rendering the last honors to our brave adversary." The SS Stephen Hopkins subsequently received the Gallant Ship Award from the War Shipping Administration, one of the few merchant ships to receive such a high honor.⁷

...American merchant seamen deserve much of the credit for sinking the German warship Stier. In addition, as I will discuss in Chapter 23, Cadet Edwin J. O'Hara should be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor posthumously -- an honor that has been denied to him by the armed forces officials in charge....

AID PROVIDED BY MERCHANT SEAMEN TO ALLIED FORCES DURING WW II (Edited excerpts from Chapter 11 of The Forgotten Heroes, pp. 106-121):

(In every Allied invasion -- including D-Day -- the U.S. Merchant Marine played a vital supporting role. In The Forgotten Heroes, I devoted a chapter to Invasion Forces. The following excerpts are from a different chapter, pointing to lesser-known contributions of the U.S. Merchant Marine):

The cargoes carried by United States merchant ships during the war show clearly how much the Allied nations and armed forces depended upon them. This is just a partial list of the essential cargoes hauled: Tanks, LCTs (landing craft tanks), field artillery pieces, munitions, jeeps, military trucks, ambulances, tires, fighter planes, airplane parts, PT boats, landing craft, locomotives, flat cars, box cars, bombs, ammunition, TNT, dynamite, gunpowder, torpedoes, various high explosives, poison gas (including mustard gas), gasoline, aviation gas, fuel, diesel oil, crude oil, kerosene, various refined petroleum products, lumber and other building materials, steel, heavy mechanized equipment, bulldozers, tractors, telegraph poles, tools, ball bearings, medical and first aid supplies, acid containers, chrome ore, asbestos, bauxite (the ore used to make aluminum for warplanes), bulk ammonia water, food stuffs (including millions of cans of Spam and K Rations), cigarettes, chewing gum, candy bars, soap, books, and U.S. Mail. They even carried homing pigeons for the Army Signal Corps and war brides. Sometimes the cargoes were so secret and essential to the war effort that they were kept in sealed containers, under 24-hour guard.³

...Merchant vessels transported millions of American troops to war zones in the Pacific theater and across the Atlantic. In 1942 the Liberty ship SS Joseph Holt carried thousands of U.S. Army soldiers to Port Moresby in the Australian Trusteeship of New Guinea on an emergency rescue mission...

As described in Chapter 9, the U.S. Merchant Marine was sent on a number of highly successful rescue missions, some involving the fates of entire countries, such as England and Russia. Australia was one of the largest trophies for the merchant seamen of the United States, yet another little-known fact in the history of these forgotten heroes.

The Merchant Marine carried enemy prisoners, too. The Liberty ship SS Benjamin Contee was transporting 1,800 Italian prisoners of war in August, 1943 when it was attacked by a German torpedo plane, off the coast of Algeria....⁵

During the war every U.S. Merchant Marine ship carried confidential military codes for communicating with military authorities and other merchant craft, documents that the officers were instructed to destroy if the vessel was imperiled. Some merchant ships, such as the freighter SS Malama, also carried “ultra secret cargoes.”⁶

...Merchant seamen were even hit by “friendly fire” from Allied armed forces. That occurred at Bari, Italy on December 2, 1943, during a German air raid on merchant shipping in the harbor. Seamen on those vessels were killed when Allied shore batteries misdirected their fire and hit ships and men instead of the attacking aircraft. ⁸

In addition to the merchant seamen who died in the war, more than 600 of them were taken prisoner by the Axis powers, and subjected to torture and forced labor. Conditions in the Japanese camps were particularly atrocious, since they never signed the Geneva Convention...

...On March 11, 1944, the crew of the SS Marion Crawford saved the lives of U.S. Army soldiers being transported on the ship, after an enemy artillery shell struck a hatch containing ammunition. An explosion and fire ensued, and more explosions were likely if the fire reached the rest of the ammunition. Faced with extreme danger, the merchant crew manned their fire stations and put out the blaze, enabling the soldiers to escape with their lives....¹⁴

Alan H. Knox related a story to me that occurred when he worked as Second Mate on the MS Cape Henry. Flying B-24 Liberators, the Royal Air Force had bombed German-controlled oil fields near the coast of Turkey. The bombers had to go in low for the mission, so a number of them were shot down by anti-aircraft fire. The crew of the Cape Henry rescued 50 or 60 British Royal Air Force flyers from life rafts in the Mediterranean and took them to the port of Famagusta on the neutral island of Cyprus.

For the 1945 invasion of Okinawa by Allied forces, the SS Sharon Victory brought C-rations for the soldiers, and was in the process of unloading the containers when air raid sirens

went off. Civilian seaman Marvin Ettinger ran to the machine gun on the flying bridge of the ship, where he was a loader. Japanese kamikaze planes were attacking, and at precisely the wrong moment the U.S. Navy gunner “started to cry and he laid down at the bottom of the gun turret moaning...” The merchant seaman manned the gun himself, and survived to tell the story.¹⁵

In another battle near the Philippine island of Leyte, the freighter SS Alcoa Pioneer was hit by a kamikaze plane. Eleven men were killed in the nighttime attack, including five members of the Navy Armed Guard. One of the merchant seamen who survived the episode, Carl E. Nelson, recalled the horrific aftermath: “Among the twisted metal and debris of every kind including body parts of some of my shipmates, I searched, hoping to offer emergency aid to those who may have survived. One fellow, a good friend of mine, was lying on the deck groaning in pain, endeavoring to push part of his stomach back inside his abdomen, one of his severed legs laying on the deck beside him. He died in my arms in just a few minutes. Only two men who had been on that flying bridge survived, both of them seriously wounded.”¹⁶

On March 1, 1945, the SS Columbia Victory was approaching one of the western beaches of the island of Iwo Jima, to deliver ammunition to the Marine Corps headquarters there. As the cargo vessel neared the shore, however, two Japanese batteries opened fire, wounding a man on the aft deck -- the fantail. Thousands of United States Marines were at the base and could have been killed in a huge explosion of the ammo carrier. Thinking quickly, the captain of the ship changed course and moved out of range.¹⁷

...When the SS Timothy Pickering was bombed near Sicily in 1943, one of the merchant seamen, 2nd Mate George W. Alther, was killed when he helped a wounded naval gunnery officer.²⁰ When the crew of the SS Jean Nicolet were subjected to torture by a crazed Japanese submarine captain in 1944 (see Chapter 5), seaman Harold R. Lee saved the life of a Navy Armed Guard sailor.²¹ ...

Even when merchant seamen did not have a well thought out plan of battle, they demonstrated great courage and bravado. It happened early in the war when unarmed merchant ships went out with telephone poles set up on the fore and aft decks, rigged to look like guns. It also occurred aboard the Liberty ship SS Knute Nelsen, when the First Assistant Engineer talked about ramming an enemy submarine if they ever got the opportunity to do so. In addition, he recommended that the officers carry sidearms, so that they could leap from a lifeboat onto a surfaced submarine, gain entrance to the conning tower and kill the commander.²²

...The SS Cedar Mills ... answered the distress call of a French destroyer in the Atlantic Ocean... It was December, 1943, and a ferocious storm had left the Allied warship in a perilous situation, short of fuel and listing at a 45 degree angle. The endangered ship would have sunk, with all hands lost, if the SS Cedar Mills had not towed her a long way to safety, five days through bad weather and mountainous seas. ²³

House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
DISCLOSURE OF FEDERAL GRANTS OR CONTRACTS

Clause 2(g) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires witnesses to disclose to the Committee the following information.

I, Brian Herbert, do not currently receive any money from a federal contract or grant. During the past two fiscal years, I have not entered into any federal contracts or grants for any federal services or governmental programs.

Brian Herbert

April 7, 2007

CV (CURRICULUM VITAE)

BRIAN HERBERT, the son of Frank Herbert, has won several literary honors, and has been nominated for the highest awards in science fiction. In 2003, he published *Dreamer of Dune*, the Hugo Award-nominated biography of his father. His acclaimed novels include *Timeweb*; *Sidney's Comet*; *Sudanna, Sudanna*; *The Race for God*; and *Man of Two Worlds* (written with Frank Herbert). Since 1999, he has written eight Dune series novels with Kevin J. Anderson, seven of which have been major international bestsellers. Their 2006 novel, *Hunters of Dune*, reached #3 on the New York Times hardcover bestseller list. In 2004, Brian published *The Forgotten Heroes*, a powerful tribute to the U.S. Merchant Marine. He has been interviewed by media all over the world. For more information, please see the website: www.dunenovels.com.
